



# UNITY

A MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF BANGLADESH HINDU BUDDHIST CHRISTIAN UNITY COUNCIL (BHBCUC)



## BHBCUC, USA OBSERVED MOHAN EKUSHEY

Consul General, NY Mr. Shamsul Haque & Ratan Barua, President, BHBCUC, USA Paying respect at the first moment of Ekushey (12:01am) at Manhattan, NY on 21<sup>st</sup> Feb 2009. Other president Nabendu Dutta, Dr. Thomas D. Roy; General Secretary Sushil Saha, Chandan SenGupta, Pradip Malaker, Pradip Das along with others will show respect at Dhaka Club along with Bangladesh Society, NY.

## Mutiny tests Hasina's mettle

By Alastair Lawson

BBC News



Many see the surrender of the rebels as a success for the government despite the bloodshed **Barely two months after being elected, Bangladeshi Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has found herself having to deal with a crisis in which the stakes were terrifyingly high.**

The death toll from this week's mutiny staged by the country's border security force, the Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) may be steadily rising, but the consensus among commentators in Dhaka is that a far bigger blood bath has still been averted.

The prime minister has been credited with not allowing the military to take control as they have in the past. "On this point nearly everyone is agreed," says the BBC's Bengali section

head, Sabir Mustafa. "From the outset Sheikh Hasina took command of the crisis and handled it with confidence and determination. "There was every chance after the mutiny began that the army could have taken matters into their own hands, stormed the BDR headquarters and carried out revenge killings for the loss of their officers. That would unquestionably have led to a far higher death toll than we have at present. "But this did not happen because the prime minister ensured that the army stayed under her command and the crisis was solved by politicians."

### High discontent

The prime minister's address to the nation on Tuesday night has been widely acclaimed as an important turning point in the crisis.

In it she sent out a strong message to the mutineers that they had no option but to lay down their arms.

She also tacitly informed the army that she was the person in charge of the crisis and she would be the person who would be dealing with it.

The fact that the stand-off was resolved by Bangladesh's democratically elected government rather than the military - which for many years has been a dominant force in the country - is hugely important.



Sheikh Hasina's address to the nation was a turning point

It shows the outside world that Bangladesh is run by a stable civilian administration and that the army is now accountable to it. It is a message that will not go unnoticed by outside investors, foreign aid agencies and the UN - all of which are eager to strengthen their presence in the country.

So if Sheikh Hasina wins plaudits for her decisive handling of the stand-off - despite the relatively high number of casualties - could she have foreseen such a development in the first place?

Most commentators agree that she was in no position to do so. They argue that the prime minister only came to power in December and had no time to be fully aware of the high level of discontent within the BDR.

**“ Measures also need to be taken immediately for officers of the BDR to come from within the regiment itself ”**

Waliur Rahman, BBC, Dhaka

Some reports from Dhaka say she was prevented from meeting rank-and-file BDR members when she visited their headquarters on Tuesday, just hours ahead of the coup. It is alleged that army officers who command the BDR's 70,000 personnel felt that such a meeting would not have been appropriate and deleted it from the prime minister's schedule. This move reportedly triggered a heated argument just before the mutiny between some BDR personnel



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and senior army officers - it was the "straw that broke the camel's back" according to Sabir Mustafa.

### Recent hostilities

So if the prime minister is exonerated, who should take the blame for not foreseeing the mutiny? Most fingers point at the country's various intelligence agencies. It is likely that the mutiny will lead to a substantial revamp of the Directorate General of Forces Intelligence, National Security Intelligence and the Special Branch of the police who, it is argued, should all in different ways have been more alert to the dangers.

Another likely spin-off from the mutiny is reform of the BDR, which needs to be done urgently.

"At the moment the country's borders are closed and there are 70,000 paramilitary border personnel with no leadership," says the BBC's Waliur Rahman in Dhaka.

One suggestion is that retired army officers - with no connection to the recent hostilities - be put in temporary charge of the BDR until longer term replacements can



be found. "Measures also need to be taken immediately

The army has not emerged from the mutiny with much credit

for officers of the BDR to come from within the regiment itself - rather than just from the army - and steps need to be taken to promote more non-commissioned officers," says Waliur Rahman. The army itself cannot expect to emerge from the mutiny unreformed. The top commander is due to retire soon and the expectation is that his successor will be a political appointee who will have no qualms about deferring to Sheikh Hasina. "Efforts are now almost certain to take place to consolidate civilian control over the army, possibly by the formation of a national security council," says Sabir Mustafa. "The army has not emerged from this crisis with much credit. There was widespread resentment - even before the mutiny - that junior officers in particular lorded it over everyone. "People did not like the military's lack of accountability." Meanwhile the military must rebuild following the loss of several senior officers in the coup. With the army weakened and an opposition Bangladesh Nationalist Party still smarting from its recent poll trouncing, Sheikh Hasina seems to have emerged from the mutiny in a stronger position than ever.

**(Re-print)**

## **BDR Munity: Who is Responsible? BHBCUC Called for Unity**

BHBCUC, USA sat for an emergency meeting to discuss the current situation in Bangladesh over BDR mutiny. The meeting called upon all the Bangladeshi people irrespective of religion to be united at this crucial time. The meeting expressed condolence for the dead, prayed for the speedy recovery of the wounded and offered sympathy for the families of dead & wounded. The meeting also expressed satisfaction the way government handles the situation called upon the government to bring the criminal to justice.



### **BHBCUC Handed Over a Memorandum to PM**

A delegation of BHBCUC-USA had given a memorandum to the Prime Minister of Bangladesh through Vice Consul AFM Zahid Hasan on 19<sup>th</sup> Feb 2008. All three presidents, Ratan Barua, Nabendu Dutta, Thomas D. Roy and General Secretary Sushil Saha attended. The delegation gave a memorandum and demanded justice. The memorandum cited 5 incidents and asked the government to take action. Those are:

1. Attack on Shibchar Temple. 10 Deity destroyed. Daily Sangbad, 14<sup>th</sup> Feb 2009
2. Minority's home occupied by Awami Leaguers, Naya Diganta, 15<sup>th</sup> Feb 2009
3. Madrassa on the land of Kantaji Mandir (Temple), Samokal, February 2009.
4. Attack on Swaraswati Pandal, Deity destroyed in Hathazri, 10 hurt. Jan 2009
5. Baneswari, Faridpur, Kali Temple & Deity destroyed, Jan 2009



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## **ISLAMISTS BUILT MADRASSA ON FAMOUS KANTAJI TEMPLE**

Above, the Hindus protested and made a procession in Dinajpur on 10<sup>th</sup> Feb 2009. They handed over a memorandum to DC. Daily Samokal reported that, on 27/28<sup>th</sup> Jan a madrassa was built on the land of Kantaji Temple.



Madrassa in Kantaji Mandir area?



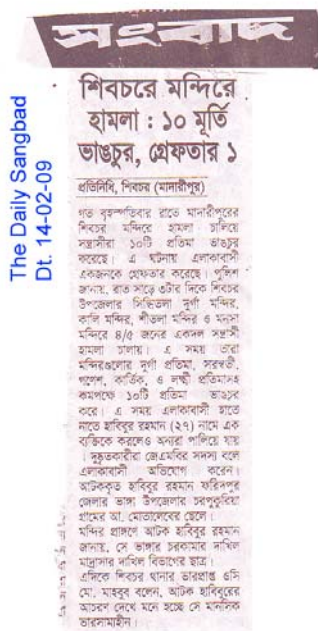
## DEITY DESTROYED IN HATHAZARI



Picture of the destroyed Mandap, temple. Above is the destroyed deity of Saraswati. This happened on 30<sup>th</sup> Jan 2009 in Hathazari, Chittagong, Bangladesh. 15/20 Islamic goons attacked the temple, injured 10 and destroyed the temple & the deity.

**[Visit: www.BHCUC-USA.ORG](http://www.BHCUC-USA.ORG)**

## 10 Deity Destroyed



Staff Correspondent (Daily Sangbad): Shibchar, Madaripur, 13<sup>th</sup> February, 2009: At least 10 (ten) Hindu deities had been demolished and desecrated by some hoodlums attacking Hindu Temple at Shibpur, Madaripur, on 12<sup>th</sup> February 2009 night. Police reported that on Thursday night at 3am 5-6 people attacked Temples at Shibchar Upazila and demolished "Sidditala Durga Temple", "Kali Temple" "Shitala Mandir" and "Manasha Mandir" The attackers also demolished at least 10 images of Hindu Goddess including "Durga Devi" "Sawraswati Devi" "Ganesh" "Kartick", and "Laksami Devi".

At this stage the local people caught one perpetrator, Md. Habibur Rahman, 27 and others fled away. People told that the attackers are active members of JMB. The arrested Md. Habibur Rahman, son of Abdul Motaleb of village Charpukuria, Bhanga Upazila, Faridpur. The arrested Habibur Rahman disclosed that he is the student of Charkamar Dakhil Madrasha. Mr. Mahabub, OC of Shibchar police station claimed that the arrested Md. Habibur Rahman seems to be a mental patient. Translated by Adv. Rabindra Ghosh

## HINDU RETIRED HEADMASTER SHOT DEAD AT HABIGANJ

**Habiganj, Feb 19, 2009:** A retired primary school headmaster was shot dead by miscreants at Ratanpur village in Sadar Upazilla early Thursday, reports UNB. The deceased was identified as Adhir Chandra Das 57, of the same village. Recently he went on retirement from Jagatpur Government Primary School. Police said 4/5 criminals attacked him as he came out from his home to see his domestic animals kept at nearby cowshed and pond in the early morning. The attackers shot him in chest and ran away. The victim died on the spot. Police said previous enmity might be the reason behind the attack (Daily Bangladesh Observer, 20<sup>th</sup> Feb 2009).

**“RASTRA SABAR, DHARMA JAR JAR”: UNITY COUNCIL  
 (“STATE IS FOR ALL, RELIGION IS PERSONAL”): UNITY COUNCIL)**



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## Death Threat to Indian High Commissioner

The daily "Samakal", 14<sup>th</sup> February, 2009: A letter dated 3rd January, 2009 had been sent to Mr. Pinak Ranjan Chakravorty, High Commissioner of India at Dhaka-Bangladesh threatening him to death. Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Bangladesh requested Home Ministry to tighten security of the High Commissioner. Home Ministry reported that, they have already asked the Inspector-General of Police for taking necessary steps after investigation in this regard.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs by its letter dated 19<sup>th</sup> 2009 vide its Memo. Number: 35 stated that one person named M.H. Rahman on behalf of Muslim Society sent this letter of threat to Indian High Commissioner. In this connection the Ministry of Home Affairs is pondering over the situation trying to change the security rules and procedures with regard to safety of the important personalities in the country.



## Awami League Leader Occupied Hindu Land

The daily Naya Diganta, 1<sup>st</sup> Feb 2009: From our Staff Reporter, 30<sup>th</sup> Jan 2009: An allegation received against Md. Hasan Habib, Organizing Secretary of Bhangura Union Awami League of Pabna district, who is also an elected Union Member forcefully occupied 4 Bigha and 1 acres of lands belonging to a Hindu Monindra Nath Mondal at Shibrapur, Chatmohar Upazila. Mr. Monindra filed a complain at Bhangura police station.

It is alleged that one Shoharab of village Boalmari had been occupying those lands for 20/25 years. Six month before after a long fight owner Mr. Monindra was given back those lands by arbitration. But as soon as the new government came into power Md. Hasan Habib illegally and with duress and threat re-occupied those lands from a poor Hindu. The Officer-in-Charge of Bhangura admitted the fact and he also expressed that necessary steps would be taken to recover the lands. Md. Hasan Habib could not be contacted.